

PS

3129

V3A8

1879



ASSASSINATION,

OR

The Closing Scene.

A Tragedy of the Great Rebellion,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DEWITT C. VESTAL.

SAN JOSE, CAL.

McNEIL BROS., Book and Job Printers, 372 First Street.
1879.



Class FS 3129

Book V3 A8

1879



DEDICATION.

It is with feelings of deep gratitude that I dedicate the following Drama to the memory of the noble dead who battled for the Union, both on land and sea, and with sentiments of love and affection for their surviving comrades, but more particularly to my comrades of Phil Sheridan Post, No. 7, G. A. R.

The Author,

DE WITT C. VESTAL.

ASSASSINATION, OR The Closing Scene.

A Tragedy of the Great Rebellion,

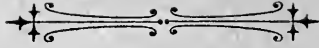
IN FIVE ACTS.

34
BY DEWITT C. VESTAL.

SAN JOSE, CAL.
McNEIL BROS., Book and Job Printers, 372 First Street.
1879.

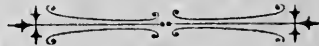


FS 3129
V3A8
1879



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,	- - - - -	President of the United States.
WILLIAM H. SEWARD,	- - - - -	Secretary of State.
EDWIN M. STANTON,	- - - - -	Secretary of War.
ULYSSES S. GRANT,	- - - - -	General Commanding U. S. Armies.
GENERALS MEADE, HANCOCK, WEITZEL, and other Generals of the United States Army.		
Union Soldiers, Black Union Soldiers, Spirits, Citizens, Attendant Messengers, Etc.		
JEFFERSON DAVIS,	- , - - - - -	President of the Confederate States.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO JEFFERSON DAVIS. - - - - -		
JUDAH P. BENJAMIN,	- - - - -	Secretary of War, C. S. A.
ROBERT E. LEE,	- - - - -	General Commanding C. S. A.
POMP,	- - - - -	Body Servant to Jeff. Davis.
Assassins, Soldiers, Attendants, Messengers, Etc.		
MRS. LINCOLN,	- - - - -	Wife of Abraham Lincoln
MRS. DAVIS,	- - - - -	Wife of Jefferson Davis.
And Attendants.		



ASSASSINATION,

—:OR:—

THE CLOSING SCENE

—:OF THE:—

GREAT REBELLION.

ACT FIRST.

SCENE 1. *Washington—President's Mansion.*

LINCOLN, *alone.*

Lincoln. For four years,—long, dark, weary years,—the weight of a continent has rested on my head. I have toiled to cement the shattered fragments of my distracted country, and restore peace and concord among my fellow citizens. I have resisted usurpation and tyranny, and with my brave and patriotic armies met mad rebellion at every point. Now victory is hovering o'er our triumphant flag. The God of justice and of battles favors our cause. The flood of precious blood that has dyed the land through this mighty war is ebbing back to its fountain. O, how my full heart beats with joy at this sweet prospect of peace. Ah, sweet peace,—with a nation disenthralled! How the spirits of our heroic sires smile a benediction upon us. The great Washington welcomes me as a younger brother, and Douglas cries, "Well done, good and faithful servant." If I have done well; if our armies have fought bravely and stormed the gates of death; if my beloved countrymen of the North and West have been loyal and true, all the praise be to thee, O God! Thou who doest all things well, and holdest the destiny of nations and of men in the hollow of Thy hand, thanks be to Thee! Thou hast saved my country from bloody destruction and made her free. O, Freedom's soil should all be free! The future looks bright, and I am happy in this glowing dawn of peace. And yet a sense of foreboding ill hangs upon my soul. A shade of coming evil enfolds my weary heart. I know not why, for honestly I have dealt toward God and Man.

But be thou free, my native land;
Content I'll be to fall or stand.

Enter SECRETARY SEWARD.

Lin. Ah! Good morning, Mr. Secretary.

Sew. And how is your Excellency to-day?

Lin. The march of Sherman down to the Sea;
And the problem solved by his victory;
Breaking with his right arm the shell
That held Rebellion, makes me feel well.

Sew. O, 'twas a fearful march even down to the sea.

Lin. O, Cruelty, thou art the shameless pride of war! But how does my good Secretary stand the shock, the labor and the jar of troublous affairs, at home and afar?

Sew. Well.

Lin. I am glad it is so. I need your counsel, your wisdom, now. How will the news of our victorious arms rest on the jealous hearts of European nations? Our own and the interests of England are so interwoven that surely she will not further hindrance lay. And France beholds Mexico with dismay.

Sew. "I reckon," as a Yankee should,
Napoleon stands with shivering blood;
While Maximilian's speedy fall
Will snatch the brand from the trembling hall
Where old dusky Montezumas reigned.

Lin. This be our watchword and our cry—Americans, rule thou America! The "Monroe Doctrine," in all its essential principles, is the only line of policy for us, especially when a neighboring Republic is threatened with war,—the Republic weak and the kingly power strong.

Sew. While Freedom to all climes belong,
Sweet Liberty, be thou our song.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Messenger. The Secretary of War desires to speak with your Excellency. He bade me say, he anxious waits.

Lin. Let him come.

Exit MESSENGER. Enter STANTON.

Stanton. Mr. President, I am much pleased to see you looking so cheerful to-day. But forgive my haste; I have overwhelming evidence that there is a damning plot maturing to take your life. In fact I felt most anxious for your safety, and could not rest till I saw you here. O, a fearful doom should be the just reward of the traitor heart that could conceive so foul a crime. Slay! Assassinate you? They know not what they do. Slay their friend? Consummate that, and 'twill be the knell, the closing infamy to slavery born. O, they can not. It must be false.

Lin. What murderous scheme is this, that so o'erwhelms my faithful friend? Have you any reliable clew to unveil this startling mystery? To have been slain in Baltimore before my first inaugural might have been expected. But now the minds of men are more calm. Let us banish the thought.

Stan. Mysterious letters have been intercepted that make me tremble for your safety. Who the guilty parties are I know not. Our Chief of Police and detectives keen are on the scent. I hope all may yet end well. Here the letters are.

Hands Letters to Lincoln.

Read and judge; then take such measures as seems to you best, holding the high, exalted station that you do.

Lin. I will guard well my life, and look up to heaven in every perilous hour.

Exeunt.

SCENE 2. *A Street in Washington.*

Enter ASSASSINS.

1st Assassin. Long have I watched the opportunity to strike the head of this Northern hydra.

2d Ass'n. I fear in my soul the serpent has too many heads to be killed at a single blow.

1st Ass'n. I could have shot him on the floor of the inaugural platform had not my conscience said "beware!"

2d Ass'n. Of yourself—I'll stake a treat on that; one to drown all conscience, too.

1st Ass'n. You know me not. I care not for my hateful life. But stand aside—too many eyes rest on us here.

They enter an alcove.

2d Ass'n. Ha, ha! By Heavens, it seems to me that hateful life is precious still to thee.

2st Ass'n. You are too rash in this affair. We must be secret as the grave. I tell you, Payne, you know me not. I hate to behold men happy, for I am not. I be happy? Ha, ha! At best I am only an intruder on this sickly world around me. Born without a name; a foul blot that I am; a living reproach to my family—the infamy of my father and my mother's shame—I tell you life is nothing. Wealth, ease, love is nothing, nothing. I long to dissolve away and be nothing to all below.

But let me sting the thing I hate,—
The creature man, the Northern Ape.

If Lincoln falls beneath my hand, my name will be as imperishable as that of Brutus. O, if it should be as infamous!

Would fate not then o'erleap its sweets,
And be the hell it thus repeats?

2d Ass'n. No act is base that saves the South.

1st Ass'n. I care not; I'll do the deed.

2d Ass'n. And spoken as the devil speaks. It seems to me 'twere best to say, I'll try.

1st Ass'n. O, never doubt me. The powers of night now are mine. But time speeds, and Richmond is doomed if we do not set her ramparts and her portals free.

Then away! Fast is speeding on the day;
And we must haste and act a hellish play.

Exeunt.

SCENE III.

A Spirit Rises and Sings.

Spirit.

Mortal, lost—adieu! adieu!

You thirst for blood,—the knife;—
The ball is winged for you,
A life, a noble life,
Robbed in peace,—not in strife,—
Will damn thy spirit true.

Other Spirits Rise.

Spirits Sing.

Mortal, lost—adieu! adieu!

The deed is quickly done;—
Then remorse will be thy due,
Thou an accursed one;
With none beneath the sun
To pity or rescue.

Mortal, lost—farewell! farewell!

Until we meet again;
You feel the fatal spell,
A dark, a demon chain!
Feel thou eternal pain,
And there, and there is hell.

Spirits Vanish.

1st Spirit Sings. Mortal, lost—adieu! adieu!

You thirst for blood,—the knife;—
The ball is winged for you,
A life, a noble life,
Robbed in peace,—not in strife,—
Will damn thy spirit true.

Spirit Vanishes.

[TABLEAU.]

ACT SECOND.

SCENE I. *Richmond—A Hall in the Presidential Mansion—President Davis and Mrs. Davis seated at Dining Table—Servant in Waiting, Etc.—Time, Evening.*

Mrs. Davis. Why does not my dear husband eat?

Davis. Love, I can not eat; I have lost my appetite. Boy, begone.

To Servant.

Pomp. (Aside.) Gorry, Massa Davis, its 'nuff to take your appetite—so tink's dis chile.

Going.

Mrs. Davis. I would not let affairs of State so heavy rest against my heart. The chivalrous South will vindicate her name and wrongs, and rise among Europe's proud towering realms. Ah, then will we be happy, all separate from the vulgar herd. O, these vile Republics—how I hate the name! Where the rabble throng, each and all sovereign power claim. Where workmen stand clammoring loud for seats beside e'en royalty—how insufferably low and vile! Cheer up, my love; on such folly smile. I am bound to thee forever. 'Tis sweet to share thy destiny.

Davis. Yes, yes, I doubt you not, my love. But oh, your love for me can ne'er the falling South redeem. A true woman's heart will suffering do all for man—more than he could ask. But love, an hour from thee I beg, and would not be disturbed.

Mrs. Davis. (Retiring.) Until then, my husband, adieu.

Exeunt.

Davis. (Alone.) How long shall my ambition be thwarted, and these fierce yoemen of the North stand up between me and the goal of my hopes. I have sacrificed every principle of honor toward my native country, and plotted against her peace and her constitution. My life has been spent laying the foundation for her division. The spirit of the great Calhoun has guided me on until I find myself plunged into fierce, remorseless and bloody war. The coil of avenging justice tightens around me. My armies are decimated; my Generals slain or fret in base captivity; my people, my brave chivalry, begin to long for peace. Even under dictation of the tyrant, the bloody-minded Lincoln, England stands aloof, and France makes fair promises but fulfills them not. The siege guns of Grant are now thundering around my Capitol.

Guns heard in the distance.

Hark! That is the voice of doom to me. The last avenue of escape will soon be shut, and I will be caged like a felon in his cell. But to whom, or where, shall I fly? To Heaven? I dare not pierce the fatal veil beyond! O, my coward heart! Why quake at pale death? I have

one hope! O, such a hope. Gods! Will not your wrath consume me if I yield to this last damned hope? O, 'twill sink my soul; and yet I would the deed were done. The lowering elements conspire against me, and hell lets loose all her horrors accumulated on my head. O, Ambition! I have traced thy steps in the march of Catiline; like him, for thee I fall. O, crime, I have seen thy reward in the traitor Arnold; and alas, since I too have unsuccessful been, eclipsed will be his name by me: his infamy I will swallow up, and hateful immortality will sound my fame through coming time and leave me, O, God, a traitor scorned! I must be calm. Fate yet may loose successful winds to waft me o'er a sea of rest. If not, farewell hope! Ambition, thou false mocking, devil, farewell! Adieu, adieu, my native land, and Heaven pour thy hot wrath out upon upon me.

SCENE II. *A Street in Richmond, Time, Twilight.—Enter Negroes, Conversing.*

1st Negro. I tells you, nigger, 'tis sartin dis Fedracy is gwine to cave.

2d Negro. Den what's to be dun wif us chile?

1st Negro. I dun no.

3d Negro. I tells you what, Sambo.

All. Yah, yah! (Laughing derisively). Go way!

3d Negro. No, gorry mitey, stop dat noise! I'se gwine to tell you what will den be dun.

1st Negro. Dat darkey (pointing at No. 3) is gwine to make a speech.

All. Hurrah, hurrah, de speech, de speech!

3d Negro. You cullud pussons, stop dat noise. When dem dar Yankees cum, dey bring de mancipating proclamation dat sets de niggers free. Bress de Lord.

De banjo den from day to day,
We'll ring while we uns will be gay;
And de white folks ob dis country,
O dey will help to make de hay.

They all Laugh, etc.

All. A song, a song, Sambo, a song.

Sambo. I want all you cullud folks to jine in dis here song.

All. All right, Sambo.

All Sing. We have dug de sweet, sweet tater,
We have cut de oak tree yonder;
We have picked de snow white cotton,
And we've raised de corn an fodder.

O, we have toiled for de white folks,
 And some ob dem we did lub so!
 Now de time has cum for nigger,
 He has heard de Proclamation;
 Hurrah, hurrah, de Proclamation.

CHORUS. Yah, yah, de white folks!
 Yah, yah, de nigger!
 Yah, yah, de white folks,
 Will dance de piggen figger.

Now de white folks dey will jine us,
 And now we boff will raise de tater;
 We will rome de swamps togedder,
 We will raise de corn an fodder.
 We will toil an bless de sunlight,
 And de moon will rise with laughter;
 No more de bloodhound scare de nigger,
 He has heard de Proclamation;
 Hurrah, hurrah, de proclamation.

CHORUS. Yah, yah, de white folks, etc.

Guns sound in the distance.

3d Negro. Don't you hear dat? Dat is de voice ob freedom to de cullud population.

1st Negro. Yah, ha! And de debbles to de white uns. Of dis ole Virginny country dat's sartin, so it is.

3d Negro. I say, Sambo, dar is no white folks round dis pop, an now lets all us darkeys jine in a Linkum song, while we listen to de music ob dem instruments ob destruction.

Guns sound in the distance.

1st Negro. What you hab, Sambo?

2d Negro. Dat one bout Bablum, what we heard dem Yankees singing ober dar while dey rested in de trenches.

All. Yah, ha, yah! Dat's sweeter dan sweet tater, so it is.

1st Negro. Dat's de song: for I specs dis yer town's wot de mean bout dat dar Bablum.

3d Negro. O, go way! Dat dar town is way off in de Jerusalem country.

1st Negro. Don't make no diffrence where it are. Leastwise it hits us niggers in de right spot; as de possum said when he scrouged inter his hole.

3d Negro. Bress de Lord! I likes dat reffrence in partickeler to we uns whar wee's gwine to shoot, and den occupy de land.

All. Hurrah, hurrah! de song, de song!

All Sing, with Banjo Accompaniment,—

BABYLON IS FALLEN.

Don't you see de black clouds risin' ober yonder.
Whar de Massa's ole plantation am?
Nebber you be frightened—dem is only darkeys,
Come to jine an' fight for Uncle Sam.

CHORUS. Look out dar, now! We's a gwine to shoot!
Look out dar—don't you understand?
Babylon is fallen! Babylon is fallen!
And we's a gwine to occupy de land.

Don't you see de lightnin' flashin in de cane-brake,
Like as if we gwine to hab a storm?
No! you is mistaken—'tis de darkey's baynets,
An' de buttons on dar uniform.

CHORUS. Look out dar, now! We's a gwine to shoot! Etc.

Way up in de cornfield, whar you hear de tunder,
Dat is our ole forty-pounder gun:
When de shells are missin, den we load wid punkins,
All de same to make de cowards run.

CHORUS. Look out dar, now! We's a gwine to shoot, Etc.

Massa was de Kernel in de rebel army,
Ebber sence he went an run away;
But his lubly darkeys, dey has been a watchin',
An' dey take him pris'ner tudder day.

CHORUS. Look out dar, now! We's a gwine to shoot, Etc.

We will be de massa, he will be de sarvant,—
Try him how he like it for a spell;
So we crack de butt'nuts, so we take de Kernel,
So de cannon carry back de shell.

CHORUS. Look out dar, now! We's a gwine to shoot, Etc.

Retire, repeating Chorus.

SCENE III. *Hall in Davis' Mansion—Black Servant, Pomp, in Waiting—Enter Private Secretary.*

JEFF. DAVIS, *Seated.*

Davis. Well, how now? What's the news?

Secretary. Sad news.

Davis. Have dispatches been received? Go, boy!

Pomp. Yes, Massa Davis, (*aside*) an' I specs your gwine, too, purty soon.

Retires, laughing.

Sec. Yes, Sir, they have.

Davis. If letters have been received by my messenger from the Yankee Capitol at Washington, or from Savannah, open them immediately.

Sec. (Opens letter and reads.) Savannah has fallen.

Davis. (Interrupting.) O, my God! I knew it must be so. The fiend and false marauder, Sherman, regarding neither the wrath of God nor the noble South, makes himself more detestable than the lesser beast, Butler. He dares to burn our peaceful towns; ravage our country; rob us of our property and emancipate our lawful slaves through all Georgia. If Sherman is not checked, Charleston must fall; the Carolinas will be ravished from our grasp; and then farewell, farewell to fame, and my more loved, sweet, sunny South.

(Sec. reads.) The particulars of the fall of Savannah I sent you in a former dispatch.

Davis. (Interrupting.) It must then have miscarried.

Sec. (Reads.) Since then the Northern horde, under the Lincoln slave, Sherman, has ruthlessly marched to the sea; and now Charleston is in flames.

Davis. O, God! It is too much to bear! Nay, *(stops Secretary impatiently)*, no more! Are there letters from Washington?

Sec. There are, your Excellency.

(Reads.) To my noble chief, the President of the Confederate States of America: Sir—When I last saw you in Richmond, and unlocked the hot chambers of my soul, and drew forth the plan of the secret mission that was nearest both our hearts,—

Davis. (Snatching the paper.) You may retire, Sir. When I desire your presence I will ring.

Secretary. (Aside.) So, ho! Such secresys of state will lead to murder, and I fear the devil's refulgent gate. *Exit.*

Davis. Ha, ha! I would not have more than one pair of eyes draw out the contents of this bloody affair. *(Reads.)* Of my secret mission nearest both our hearts, you did not unlock the shadowy mysteries of your soul to me, and say as much as—do it. Let blood be spilt for blood,—and yet methought I read in the unlettered volume of your face—O, that He were dead! O, that some deadly ball were speeding through his ruthless brain. 'Ere you look on this, Fate will have spoken her decree. On the night of———there will be a play—a simple play—at———Theatre. Our enemy will be there to behold his "Country Cousin;" and by my soul he will find one who will cling to him closer than a brother. The magazine is fired; soon the towering edifice that held all nations in awe, and o'ertopped you as much as to say—I am Chimborazo, you a mole-hill in Illinois—will be left a fragment and a ruin.

A loud Ringing.

Enter POMP—Bows Low.

Davis. Pomp, what is the meaning of all this ringing?

Pomp. De Secretary ob de War and de ladies wait to see you; an de way dey frightened looks, Ise sartin de Yankees am cummin soon.

Davis. Black prophet thou art, and black thy speech. (*Aside.*) He did say ere I received this my enemy would be a ruin. The magazine is fired? (*Aloud.*) Bid my good friends enter, quick.

Pomp. Yes, Sah. (*Aside.*) Ha ha, de magazine is fired. I guess Massa Davis is gwine to blow us up. *Exit.*

Enter BENJAMIN, MRS. DAVIS, and other Ladies.

Davis. Welcome, dear Benjamin; thrice welcome, dear ladies.

Mrs. Davis. How feels my noble husband now?

Davis. Ah, much better since you have come.

Mrs. Davis. Would I could bring peace and safety to our home.

Davis. (*Aside.*) Where thou art, happiness doth bloom.

Benjamin. Nor this vandal steel around us shone. But, Mr. President, O, that greater power still were thine. My heart is yours—linked together—through storm or sunshine we stand or fall. And my honored Sir, the gulf now yawns before us. The enemy are preparing for a last assault. Our soldiery—our brave veterans, with many laurels crowned—led by gallant Lee—the last proud prop of chivalry—have done all that men could do, and Gray must yield at last to Blue. But here the General comes. He for himself can speak.

Enter LEE and Staff.

All. Welcome, brave General! Hope and defender of the South, welcome!

Lee. My friends, it is too late to speak of compliments, and yet I thank you from my heavy heart. The times are perilous. The city is doomed to be carried by fierce assault. Although our troops now stand like grim, fearful demons, contesting every trench and mound, our works are only a blackened ruin. Yet the watchful foe moves cautiously on our red brazen throats of death; and let us be prepared for that emergency, for I fear the pall of lowering night seals Richmond's fall.

Mrs. Davis. My God! My God! Can this be true?

Lee. Dear Madam, we of the South have poured out our precious blood as falls the seething torrent from the verge of roaring Niagara. We have battled for four dread years, but could not break the cordon drawn. Now dire fate speaks out, and we must bow submissive to her decree.

Mrs. Davis. And must we stoop to this cruel humiliation? Must the foe o'erwhelm our Capitol? Then burst full heart, and eyes unused to tears pour forth your fountains fast, until my very soul flows out in

streams for my country lost. My sunny South! My childhood's home! With all your sweet remembrances must we, can we, lose even all? O, would I had not seen this hour, nor lived to love my native land.

Swoons.

SCENE IV. *A Street—Troops Marching too and fro.*

Enter SOLDIERS, Conversing.

1st Soldier. It is scarce past midnight, and yet these Yanks are up and swarming like bees.

2d Sol. Yes, Jock, and I fear that before to-morrow night we shall feel the sting of that same vermin brood.

3d Sol. Well, let them come; we can but die. Then let us die like men. As for one, I had as soon die by Yankee's hands as in the gripe of grim starvation.

1st Sol. And I, being a conscript, if I should make my choice, I'd die by neither.

2d Sol. And a conscript I; and if the city falls, what then?

1st Sol. Keep your eyes on my swift retreating heels, and follow them. Then, if luck is ours, good-bye, Johnny Graybacks, good-bye!

2d Sol. You are a trump, and I will play that hand.

3d Sol. Comrades, I could betray you, and then you know your fate. But no; from childhood's days we've together been; I can not say to you good luck, but good hearts, farewell.

The bugle calls, and we must away, away,
And close our ranks against the fierce affray.
My lot is cast with thee, dear Southern cause,
Come weal, come woe, I'll resist the Yankee laws.

1st Sol. Adieu, adieu, my early valliant friend,
Dearer than the cause we both must now defend;
But you are pledged from freedom's choice,—
I, alas! am bound by a tyrant's force.

Bugle sounds the Call.

Exeunt.

Enter DAVIS and BENJAMIN.

Benjamin. Have you the treasure all collected?

Davis. All is safe.

Benj. Heavens! Safe as a guard of soldiery can make it. I wish we were as safely gone. But how is Mrs. Davis, and the ladies now!

Davis. Serene and calm.

Benj. Then haste, noble President, and let's be gone.

When our bark is dancing on the seas,
 'Twill then be time to idly take our ease.
 Then the war steed may o'er our valleys prance,
 We'll bid adieu, and gaily sail for France. *Exit.*

Davis. Ha, ha ! This double traitor—this Jewish cur—is even now happy with his treasure. And the illusion, the false hope of safety ! My coward heart, how can I yield and fly.

Alarm guns heard.

Hark ! Richmond, farewell ; this Sabbath day
 Lures me on, and I must haste away.
 Magnanimous foes won't insult my woe,
 And hunt down women and a fallen foe.

Alarms.

Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Defences around Richmond—Time, Night—Alarms and Siege Guns heard in the Distance.*

Enter DAVIS and LEE.

Davis. Do you not hear the clang of arms, and the tramp of marching columns ? It is too true the enemy are preparing for to-morrow's assault. My brave General, what shall we do ? Shall we stand or fall, defending the intrenchments around our beleaguered Capitol ?

Signal Rises.

But see ! behold ! Where must I fly ; 'tis death to longer here remain. Alas ! these dungeon walls must topple down, and woe to him who stands beneath and dares the fatal fall. This demon, Grant—this butcherer of countless hordes—is grim and calm, toying with death as the chessman at his play. O, none can stop his mad career. I foresee and utter now this prophecy, that this Grant will stand at the gates of Death, and seize old Time by his hoary locks and drag sweet success from out the bloody jaws of fate.

Alarms.

Lee. Aye, aye, it may be so. This is my counsel : The city lost, evacuate. With all speed haste across the Cumberland ; over the mountains fly, and form a junction with Johnston there. Fall upon Sherman, and, if victorious, cut his army up. When war in our favor thus decides, among the fastnesses of Carolina and Virginia stand. Sound the alarm ; once more with frenzy fire the Southern heart ; then return and chastise in blood this cruel, relentless monster, Grant. Such is my plan. If successful, well ; if not, adieu, fond hopes, adieu ! All our toil during these weary years will have been in vain ; the blood of our best citizens will have been shed in vain ; our self sacrifices will be held

as crimes; the hoarse raven croak of death will be sounded o'er our abject heads; and remorseless, Titan-handed vengeance, will plunge us down deep into that grave which all the perils of a terrible war has thus far denied us.

A Signal Gun heard.

Hark! That signal proclaims approaching day;
The jackal prowls and scents his mangled prey.
We must prepare to break his gory jaw,
Or tamely yield and fill his hungry maw.

ACT THIRD.

SCENE I. *Scene, Camp before Richmond—Lincoln and Grant Seated before a Tent, Conversing.*

Lincoln. Well, General, will you make the assault to-morrow?

Grant. To-morrow? That is Sunday. The day has a record for bloody deeds, and we will storm the town.

Lin. How are the spirits of our officers and soldiery?

Grant. Fine with courage; firm as Damascus steel.

Lin. Brave men, worthy of their country and their sires, and worthy too the foe they now cope, withal. I would that their lives were not imperiled thus.

Grant. Yes, yes, but we must do our duty.

Lin. Duty true the hope of freedom and liberty for all time to come at every hazard must be sustained. And yet I loathe this flow of blood.

Enter MESSENGER, in haste.

Messenger. General Sheridan reports that his fleet scouts have seen columns of dust rise far in the rear of Richmond. He believes the enemy are retreating.

Grant. Very well, Lieutenant. With my compliments to gallant Sheridan, you may now retire.

Hands Orders. Messenger Retires. Grant Lights Cigar.

Lincoln. (Rising.) My dear General, I bid you now, and much against my will, good-bye. May success on our armies rest until this foul Rebellion shall be quite crushed out. Of the fall of Richmond I shall wait to hear in your next dispatch.

Grant. We will do all that men can do.

Lincoln. And God will complete your work. I to Washington must haste. If we survive, I hope we may yet see our country restored to peace and prosperity, with no black dismembering evil festering in her vitals.

Grant. Amen! Amen!

Lincoln. (Lingering.) Brave Lieutenant, are there no means of stopping this effusion of blood? Again and again I have held the olive branch of peace—thrown out and offered pardon if our fierce brothers of the South would lay down their hostile arms and then back as quiet citizens return. O, would to God they now would yield and stop this loss of life. O, war, dread, deceitful war, thy paths are rough and treacherous. When shall we learn to war no more?

Grant. I know not when. Yet this I know, your Excellency: These Rebels, proud and fierce, must be whipped, to gain a peace. Men who will break all their oaths, and violate every principle of honor, too, by deceiving their own countrymen; putting to blush humanity in the treatment of their helpless prisoners; crowding them in loathsome cells; herding in pens of horror, exposed to all inclemency, starved, wantonly starved and shot by cruel and heartless guards without a cause; men who would break up the best Government in the world, and through fraud and savage barbarity strive to hoist on its fragments a proud Aristocracy—with such, pleading will be vain. We must chastise them, conquer them, destroy them. If blood be spilt, they are held responsible. If all the horrors of war to the last moment now extend, they will be held responsible. Responsibility must upon the heads of Rebel leaders fall. The end is drawing nigh. With Richmond must sink all hopes of this Confederacy.

Lincoln. Trusting all to you and heaven, I bid you again adieu.

Exeunt.

Grant. He has gone—the greatest and best of modern times. A Cincinnatus of the West our great Lincoln is. At first I thought him made of weak and limber stuff; but 'tis goodness, kindliness of heart that makes him sometimes wavering look; it is no want of firmness in the right. 'Tis loathing of bloodshed and of pain—O, unsuspecting greatness. He seems all unconscious of danger, too, and will not guard his precious life, though all engrossed in other's pains. O, none can guard the shafts of fate; and who can guard 'gainst treachery?

Enter an ADJUTANT.

Adjutant. (Saluting.) General, have you any special orders for the night?

Grant. My Generals and corps commanders will assemble at to-morrow's sunrise in council at yon clump of trees. You will see them notified.

Adj. I will.

Salutes and Retires.

Grant calls Orderly. Enter an ORDERLY, *Saluting.*

Grant. Orderly, haste to General Sheridan, and tell him to double his vigilance and his guard. If the enemy escapes he must be captured. Be swift and speed for Sheridan.

Enter Generals HANCOCK and MEADE.

Grant. Generals, I am right glad to see you here.

Hancock. (*Saluting.*) I report my corps in readiness for the contest, and impatient for the hour the signal of final victory.

Grant. Then, General, you feel sure of victory.

Han. Most certainly.

Grant. The enemy's fierce attack on our lines yesterday shows him to be most terribly in earnest.

Meade. But he has been as fiercely met, and wildly driven back, and now my men are chafing for the last assault.

Grant. To me the enemy's attack of yesterday meant something more than a desire to fight. I feel that it was done to cover up some great design.

Meade. It might have been a spasm charge while looking for that "last deep ditch" for which the foe so long have sought.

Han. And bravely filled the gory moat with mangled corpses sadly torn, by shot and shell and bullet slain. Comrades, this war is not in vain. This reckless carnival of death is the harbinger of a future crowning the ages with renown, heralding the grand heroic deeds of America's valorous sons, lending fire to genius and wings to the fair, fickle goddess, Fame.

Grant. The South are brave; and so the West; so the East, and so are they of Maine. Generals, this war will soon close. The enemy can hold out but little longer. The diversion of Sherman; the fall of Atlanta, Charleston and Fort Fisher: the close pressing of Johnston up toward Raleigh; the great success of stern Thomas in Western Tennessee—crushing Hood's army in helpless ruin—with Sheridan's quick victories in the Shenandoah, leave Lee in Richmond with his last Rebel hope; and that is doomed to disappointment soon.

Meade. Our armies will quickly fulfill and bring about your prophecy.

Exeunt Hancock and Meade.

SCENE II. *Grant Seated in a Grove of Trees, alone, Smoking—Time, Sunrise.*

Grant. Thou bright orb—light of earth and lamp that light'st the court of heaven—how warm and soft thy beams! Thou who witnessed the birth of man, and followedst him in all his wanderings in the ages gone, and hast beheld the sack and ruin of cities in every clime; thou flaming monarch of the skies, dost thou not feel a fierce and burning wrath when we of earth—so puny and so frail—throw aside the emblems of peace, and with dripping hands, red as thy scorching ray, lift upon high instruments of death and fearful destruction, and make the

very blue vault reek with sulphurous fumes and deadly vapors? Thou lord of day, and guide that light'st the feet of men, I now invoke thee. And may the blood that will soon be shed sink as seed in this rebellious land, and bring from out the absorbent earth spirits more free, and valor to endow her future sons with a wondrous chivalry, as true to the Union then as now and in the past they have been bound to state sovereignty and the wicked bondage of men.

Enter COUNCIL OF WAR, all Saluting.

Meade. We are tardy, General, yet we greet you this bright, lovely morning.

Grant. (Returning salute.) Generals, what is your counsel? Freely speak.

Meade. Mine is, attack without delay.

Hancock. And mine.

Weitzel. And mine.

Other Generals. And mine, etc.

Grant. (Impatiently.) Comrades and brave commanders, I now agree and counsel this extremity. This day decides the fate of foul rebellion, and treason, too. 'You have fought victoriously, battling for the Union by my side in a hundred worthy victories. One struggle more and the day is ours. Our batteries have wide breaches tore and made sad havoc with their works. Yon rising column of dismal smoke proclaims destruction done. Our men are chafing for the fight; then lead your brave divisions on. This is my order for the day: Brave Hancock leads the left; and you, true Weitzel, lead on the right; and you, dear Meade, the centre take. Let all commanders bravely act—Sedgwick and Sumner emulate. Strike for the Union strong and true. Our brothers of the North and west look down, while patriot blood cries out to us, not for bloody vengeance but for justice done. This the day, and now the hour for victory. Generals, to the charge lead on. God and Liberty bless our arms, and Freedom be our battle cry.

Exeunt. Bugle sounds.

The Charge Sounded, with Alarms.

SCENE III. *A Fierce Attack, Etc.—Alarms—Another Part of the Field. Enter Black Union Soldiers, bearing Wounded Confederate, bearing Confederate Flag.*

Black Soldier. Dear Massa Tom, and is you killed? O, God, dat I should eber see my good young massa die.

Confederate Soldier. (Faintly.) Caesar, do not expose your life for me.

B. Sol. My life belongs to massa Lincon and de Union, dat is true; but I must not let you die, child.

C. Sol. (*Looking at the flag.*) And yet I must—that horrid wound; I can not live. My God, so young and must I die? O, my sweet land, in this dread hour I doubt your cause! O, would I had not against my country fought! But too late! too late! too late! (*Rising partially, with difficulty, and looking at the flag.*) This is my last charge, old flag. Some other hand must unfurl thee to the breeze, if thou hast not, like my poor heart, received thy fatal wound to-day. O, I have borne thee over many fields, when the eagles of the Union went down. Now the stars and stripes in splendor shine, and dim this failing lustre of thine. (*Kissing Flag.*) Old flag, farewell! Caesar!

B. Sol. Yes, massa Tom.

C. Sol. Tell my mother I loved her, dying, better than ere before. Caesar, (*Whispers*)—

B. Sol. Yes, massa Tom.

C. Sol. Come nearer—there. Tell my Mary—the blue eyed angel living high up on the hill o'erlooking my once dear old home—O, mine, alas, no more! Tell her I loved her, and was true to her through all my life. But hark! (*A shout.*) What shout is that? (*Rising partly.*)

B. Sol. Dat is de Lincon battle cry ob freedom. De city has been taken. *Music, band playing "Battle Cry of Freedom."*

C. Sol. O, God, take Thou my soul. 'Tis well to die this hour.

Dies.

B. Sol. He is dead! My dear Massa, you always was good to me, and I loved you, too. And de sweet angel on de hill, dis will break her tender heart. O, dis cruel war! We black folks is not wuff all dis. Yet, thank God, massa Lincon makes us niggers free.

SCENE IV. *A Forrest Thunder Storm Raging—Davis Seated in a Tent—Negro Servant in Waiting—Time, Sunset.*

Davis. Lower storms and roll ye thunders, ye are emblems of my fortunes! O, fate, I feel thy heavy hand; and can my destiny be just?

Pomp. (*Aside.*) Massa Davis, I dun no bout dat; but I knows you uns has bin hard on de cullud folks, shure.

Enter MESSENGER, Saluting.

Davis. Friend, what news?

Messenger. Petersburg is lost.

Davis. Then all is lost! lost! lost!

Enter second MESSENGER, Handing Letter, Etc.

Davis. (*Continuing.*) We are undone; 'tis written in thy frightened looks.

Pomp. (*Aside.*) Whoo-ah! but de Yankees has skeered you dis time. O, ha! ha! if dis nigger was to get skeered like dat he'd be a white one, shore.

Messenger. General Lee is in full retreat, and fiercely fighting back the foe. From Richmond here I swiftly came; and when I left the Yankee hordes, led on by General Weitzel, were swarming o'er the smoking town, while flames were raging everywhere.

Davis. Alas, fond hopes, our cause is lost! (*Aside.*) O, grave, thou art my only rest! O, fame, thou art a living worm, to gnaw my name through coming time!

Pomp. (*Aside.*) Massa Davis, Ise bin your boy dis many years, and you hasn't bused me; but dis here "Lost Cause" is not gwine to make dis here contraband weep, bress de Lord!

Davis. (*To Messengers.*) My faithful friends, you now need rest after your hard and desperate ride. Seek shelter, and refreshments, too, such as here my camp affords. This boy will attend you.

Exit Messengers.

Enter NEGRO SERVANT.

Davis. Boy!

Servant. Here I is, massa Davis.

Davis. Attend these friends, and see that they have fire and food, and then get you to bed.

Pomp. Ise dun gwine to do it, massa Davis. (*Retiring—aside.*) De way de elments is here lookin' after dese gentlemen, I guess dey wish de Yankees had already cotched 'em.

Davis. (*Thunder Rolling.*) Gods, behold my fallen fortunes! How abject a thing I now am. The black heavens frown and mock me. Then burst all ye gates of ruin! I can not fly your vengeance poured. Ah, would my hand could execute the fiery promptings of my will. Vengeance, revenge, ah happy thought! Thou should'st be mine. My brain feels hot, and all the demon of my soul springs up and cries out for sweet revenge. Why not? Is my country lost—nothing? Is falling down from regal splendor naught? Shades of departed greatness—noble Jackson; valiant Johnston; and thou, O gallant Hill, I now invoke thy aid for swift vengeance on this invading swarm. O, smite this Jester of the North; tear off the laurels he has won; tread down the stars so brilliant now, and overthrow that haughty flag which flouts the South in her distress. I will not yield! Ha, ha, if I fall—tossed to fell destruction down—yon monster I will drag with me! Ha ha, come fair, come foul, never will I yield, though dark frowns the day. Vengeance may break this Northern clay. Bright stars, behold the tyrant fall, while smiles out fortune on us all. For thee we smite, dear sunny land. Nerve thou the arm the avenging hand!

Pomp. (*Aside, from behind a tree.*) Dar is a mighty sight ob trouble brewin' for de white folks in dis ole Virginny country. And Ise off to bed now.

SCENE V. *A Roadway, near Camp—Time, Night.**Enter POMP, with Bag, Etc.*

Pomp. Gosh-a-mighty, massa Davis, but Ise glad I heard dis here sentinel blowin' his horn. (*Taking cock from bag and laughing.*) Massa sez to me, Pomp, go to bed! But who eber heard of a nigger goin to bed in dis here country when dese fellows was soundin ther bugles at night and we uns could reach ober dar and take em in. Golly but it's hard on you, old rooster. Guess dis chile has got to eat and morne dat we uns am running away from dem Yankees; leastwise massa Davis is, and I specks I'll hab to run away from massa Davis. If I duz, Ise gwine up Norf, whar I can make sum money and be a man. Massa Davis, I knows its mean, but I can't help feeling good when I knows Ise gwine to be free for sartin. I knows we uns are runnin away, but dem Yankeys will cotch us, shore. O, look dar, de moon am risin! de storm am blowed away. O, my thigh, but ain't she purty? I can't help it. (*Putting down bag.*) I feel so good Ise gwine to sing a song—one we used to sing in de "Ole Cabin Home," down on de plantation fore de war.

*Sings Song.**OLD KENTUCKY HOME.*

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home,
 'Tis summer, the darkeys are gay,
 The corn top's ripe and the meadow's in the bloom,
 While the birds make music all the day.
 The young folks roll on the little cabin floor,
 All, merry, all happy and bright.
 By'n by hard times comes a knocking at the door,
 Then my old Kentucky Home, good-night.

CHORUS. Weep no more, my lady, oh! weep no more to-day!
 We will sing one song for the old Kentucky Home,
 For the old Kentucky Home, far away.

They hunt no more for the possum and the coon
 On the meadow, the hill and the shore.
 They sing no more by the glimmer of the moon,
 On the bench by the old cabin door.
 The day goes by like a shadow o'er the heart,
 With sorrow where all was delight;
 The time has come when the darkeys have to part,
 Then my old Kentucky Home, good-night.

CHORUS. Weep no more my lady, oh! weep no more to-day! *Etc.*

The head must bow and the back will have to bend,
 Wherever the darkey may go;
 A few more days, and the trouble all will end
 In the field where the sugar-canes grow.

A few more days to tote the weary load,
 No matter, 'twill never be light,
 A few more days till we totter on the road,
 Then my old Kentucky Home, good-night.

CHORUS. Weep no more my lady, oh ! weep no more to-day ! Etc.

Picks up bag and starts for camp.

Enter UNION SOLDIERS, following, etc.

1st Sol. Halt there, Johnny !

Pomp. Don't shoot ! Ise an honest nigger ; Ise no Reb.

2d Sol. Where do you belong ?

Pomp. Ise Pomp, massa Davis' boy.

3d Sol. What Davis ?

Pomp. O, don't shoot ! Ise Massa Jeff Davis' boy ; but Ise an honest nigger, I is.

All Sols. Hurrah ! etc.

Waving caps.

1st Sol. What have you got in that bag ?

Pomp. O, don't shoot ! Dat is some 'freshments for massa Davis and de ladies.

2d Sol. (*Examining bag, etc.*) What is your name ? (*Aiming at Pomp.*)

Pomp. Don't shoot ! My name is Pomp. I don't know bout de tother one, unless you calls me Davis. Ise been with massa Davis all my life.

1st Sol. Here Pomp, you go to camp with us, and tell the Captain all about your master and where he is, or we will blow off the top of your head.

Pomp. Gosh-a-mighty, don't put dat dar fortyfycation so close up to my head ; it might blow up !

2d Sol. Will you guide us to the Johnny Rebs ? Will you do it on the square ?

Pomp. Don't shoot, Ise dun took you right dar. De camp is right ober de hill yonder.

1st Sol. Pomp, don't give any sign to let the Rebs know that the Yanks are here, or your a dead nigger.

Pomp. Don't shoot ! Ise gwine to be a Yank when I goes up Norf.

2d Sol. (*Laughing.*) You are going to be a Yank, you black rascal !

Pomp. Well, I don't keer ; I aint no Johnny Reb. Ise gwine up Norf, and be a man and love de Union ; for you uns has made us niggers free ; and de nigger's heart dat would not be true to de ole flag under dat 'sideration ought to beat in de bussom of a white Johnny Gray-back, so it ought.

3d Sol. O, you git out ! You are putting on style, you black cuss. Don't we see you have been stealing, and ain't you the boy of the old

boss Johnny? Now you want to play virtuous and be a lover of the Union. Get out, you black devil, and give us a rest! *Aiming.*

Pomp. Now fore de Lord, don't shoot! Ise a good nigger, and I'll never take nuffin no more.

1st Sol. Well, Pomp, take up that bag and that old bugler, and quick time, march!

Exeunt.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE 1. . *Washington Executive Mansion—Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln seated in a room—Time, Evening.*

Lincoln. This is a day in which the world may well lift up their heads erect and shout with all a freeman's lungs for the peerless goddess Liberty. The curse of this dear land is gone; and with it, civil war.

Mrs. Lincoln. Happy day! Carnage now is o'er.

Lin. May the gaping wounds our country has received be healed up in peace, while we forget the bloody past.

Mrs. L. Amen! and spoken as my husband speaks, who is noble, just and true.

Lin. My love, it is the language of my heart.

Mrs. L. Yes, for always you are true to the best interests of our country.

Lin. I try to be, God supporting me through every fierce extremity.

Bell rings; Mrs. L. retires.

Enter GEN. GRANT and SEC. STANTON.

Lin. My good friends, I do welcome you most heartily this day; and you, my brave commanding General, in behalf of our rejoicing country, I now congratulate. And through you the soldiery—brave, firm, tried and true—who at last, after many weary days have saved it.

Grant. Thanks, your Excellency! I feel, and always have so felt, our country was more than worthy the great and fearful sacrifice her sons so freely gave when they offered up their precious lives.

Stanton. Ah, they have demonstrated to all the world that they did know how to die as well as how to live, still loving the Republic more than life. And in their death they honored it, and we now living, honor them.

Lin. Be undisturbed and sweet the sleep that locks the patriot heart in death. And we, who now long vigils keep, will guard the grave where slumbereth each Roman of this latter age. Remembered they will be by man while freedom lives to charm the world; but, though much the loyal dead have done, much yet remains for us to do.

Grant. Yes, dangers still are rife, and we must guard against foul treachery. Dire hate thrills through the Southern heart, and madness lurks in their despair. 'Tis well to guard 'gainst every harm till time lulls down the passing storm.

Stanton. (*To Lincoln.*) Tread cautiously the slippery path where every breeze is filled with wrath; where malice grim, and demon hate may seek thy life, assassinate. O, do not think that cowardice makes me fear; 'tis solicitude.

Lin. I thank ye each for thy advice, and feel thou holdest dear my life. Our Secretary loved of State, who met with such sad accident, how rests he? Are his injuries of such severe, deep character, as to keep us from his counsels long?

Stanton. They are severe; but still in him the thread of life is strong, I hope; he much regrets that he must be cooped up while happiness so fills the heart of every loyal man; and the Union resounds with song and loud rejoicing.

Lin. Alas! Dame Fortune's wheel may turn, you see; and a coach overturned may be an end to nirthful jollity. (*Re-enter MRS. LINCOLN.*) But here comes better company. *Enters, bowing to Lincoln.*

Mrs. L. I greet you back from victory, my dear General; You I would now joyfully congratulate. Most worthy Stanton, both of you I have the honor to greet to-day.

Grant. Fair hostess, guardian over this our house of state, I do thank you; I burthened am with compliments.

Stanton. And I.

Mrs. L. No more than your country feels to be merited by you.

Grant. Many thanks, from my very heart, fair lady. Such remembrance is sweet; but now swift time presses; I must be gone; for the North my destination is. The people expect us all to be at Ford's to-night to witness there "Our Country Cousin" played. I am compelled to stay much against my will away. I trust your presence will your Excellency and our fair hostess here more than be compensation fair for me.

Lin. That you, I, and the people may all be pleased, we are pledged to sit in attendance there.

Grant. In this I am gratified, that you will go among the people, for many tales float on the wind. The war, though it was fitly closed, (bright, polished steel will soon be dyed with quick corroding rust; happily may it ever rust, eating deep where once clung warm fraternal blood.) Though now this jubilee has come, the air is thick with mysteries of dark and dread conspiracy. O, would that I could stay with you, or else could drive from out my heart this fear so undefinable.

Stanton. No, do not move without a guard. Detail at once a trusty band to shield your life, and make secure security thus doubly sure.

Lin. I trust there is no cause for fear—kind thanks for your solicitude.

Grant. O, may the glowing dawn of peace drive hence this cloud from recent storms; and soon, O, thirsty earth drink up, all traces of this cruel war. My friends, alas, I must be gone. For a few fleeting days, adieu!

Stanton. Business pressing, I hasten too, though reluctantly I take my leave.

Lin. Where duty calls, there we must go. Farewell, Lieutenant, and should we not meet again this side the grave, in a better land O let us meet.

Mrs. L. And I would bid you both farewell.

Exit Grant and Stanton.

SCENE II.

Lin. Hasten, love; time is swiftly flying.

Mrs. L. O my dear husband, do not go! Fearful shadows fill my heart with sad forebodings for to-night.

Lin. Why, my love, why not? Must we sit and nerveless faint by shadows ruled? 'Twould ill become our Saxon blood—O, you know that I am pledged.

Mrs. L. Shadows, evil monitors thou art! Yet my heart says beware! Wherefore, I know not; yet, O God, I feel a sense of horror there!

Lin. It is a groundless fear, conjured up by the overheated brain; in this hour of victory blest with much rejoicing—O there is, alas, much cause for sadness, too. Dearly art thou won, O victory, where kindred blood is spilt!

(*Aside.*) O, fate, I feel my destiny fulfilled. In all the past an unseen hand has led me through the storms of life; and at last, since my work is done, shall I not trust in Thee, O God? *Exit Lin.*

Mrs. Lin. (Alone.) Greatness, how dangers surround thee! The peaceful cottager dwells secure beneath his sheltering vine, blessed through his allotted days with love and joy, and dies content. But greatness, around thee cluster dangers in a thousand forms, and crowns with black death thy dizzy heights! Lo the earthquake shakes the mediocre plain, but rends the towering rock! O, Nature, it is thy law; I will, I must perforce, be content.

Re-enter Lincoln. (Meeting.)

Cheer up. Many friends attend us to-night.

Exit Mrs. L.

Lincoln. (Alone.) To preserve my life and destroy this Republic, or the Union save by laying down my life, which is most precious to my

heart? I, the ruler of a free people, throw around me a potent shield of military power to safe hedge in my life, and be the foe of freedom and of man; living the germ of future despotism? O, away vile thought! O, shall it be said in far distant lands, where I am as a patriot known, that I, who penned the Proclamation which set the bondman free, enslaved my country to save my life? Never! though the assassin's knife stab my heart to-night, no, never! The Executive who follows me shall have no such precedent—fatal to our liberties and a fortress for his tyranny. I shall live as I have lived—a freeman, a man from the people and of them raised from obscurity by the voice of many countrymen, I will not now a traitor grow, the hand that raised me up betray. My native country, I for thee have lived; and should I shrink if it were best that I should for thee die? Great God! if such a sacrifice could heal all dissent now, and be a sacred seal to peace, I would cry out, "Thy will be done." Better it is to die by vile assassin hands, than as tyrant assassinate my country. Sweeter it is to die and leave a name from dishonor free, than to live the despot of America.

I, at least, will unguarded go,
 Attended not by martial show;
 He who breathes this western air
 Never can yield to thee, despair!
 Quakest, O heart, with fear to-night?
 Death is sweeter than tyrant might.
 Freedom the watchword and the cry,
 I could but ask for thee to die.

Exeunt.

SCENE III. *A Room in Washington—Time, Night.*

Enter ASSASSINS, examining weapons.

1st Assassin. Now, welcome fate, it is the hour.

2d Ass'n. Let death and horror brood over the land. O pity, hide thy face, and mercy shut thine eyes to-night.

1st Ass'n. A curse on the false Yankee heart.

3d Ass'n. I wish they had but one and I could stab it.

4th Ass'n. A toast, Death to the jester of the North.

They fill glasses.

All. Hurrah! death to the tyrant!

Drink.

1st Ass'n. Comrades, be cautious and be bold. The fierce Grant has northward gone. Heaven favors us; be bold and strike home; success shall crown our enterprise.

2d Ass'n. Then confusion, let thy reign begin.

3d Ass'n. And paralyze the abolition horde.

4th Ass'n. A toast.

They fill.

Oblivion to all universal freedom ; the great Caucasian is the true type of man, and his should be the ruling race.

All. Hurrah, hurrah ! etc.

2d Ass'n. Freedom to the white and slavery to the black, we say.

All drink.

1st Ass'n. That's the true sentiment forever, the normal condition of man. Time speeds ; we must keep cool and brave. I know well the President's box ; the lot is mine to take his life ; O smile, ye Gods ! He dies to-night.

All. Speed the ball that strikes the tyrant's brain. *They fill.*

1st Ass'n. You know your tasks. Let all be slain. Act like men and strike for revenge. We yet may from thrall'dom free the South in her extremity, and smite the serpent whose mighty coil is tightening round our childhood's home. O, when the hydra head is low, his fangs at will can then be drawn. A curse on the North ! The lightning of our wrath shall blast and blight it.

All Drink.

All. A curse on the hand that falters !

1st Ass'n. The sands of time are running fast away,
Night overbroods and shuts the court of day ;
Darkness profound will hang a shield for thee,
Strike neath its shade and set some spirit free ;
If not to heaven it takes its last farewell,
Speed then, with a curse, to the gates of hell.

Assassins look to the weapons and Exeunt.

ACT FIVE.

SCENE I. *Ford's Theatre—Band Playing "Hail Columbia"—President Lincoln and Family and Friends in Private Box.*

1st Assassin. (*Stealthily Approaching President's Box—Aside.*) That cursed song ; I'll set it to a different tune ! My bleeding country, for thee I smite ! (*Drawing Pistol, etc.*) O, thou revolving engine of death, thou art unlike our changing earth, that rotates and in her revolutions fructifies and reproduces life ; but thou—thou glittering devil—thou turnest, and death is in thy motion. I touch thee, a flash, an echo, a groan and all is o'er. And then—O, and then, the shades of the damned will stand with averted face and scorn me for the deed. O thou torturing fiend, thou demon of the soul ! Conscience,—why dost thou rear thy grimy form and mock me here ? Is he not my enemy ? O, the anguish, the despairing cry that rolls in terror from Richmond to the Gulf. The South is draped in universal night, and this giant as a monster stands,

while his shadow chills us all to death. Death!—O thou gate to life or eternal pain; thou burning hell that, like an eagle, tears my breast when the future as an ocean rolls before me. *Looks into the Box.*

Will it be murder? Assassination? That crime belongs not to America. 'Tis a thing for kings and despots, an Indian's revenge. No, no, 'tis not for revenge.

If the chain that guides the ship of state
Can now be cut, its guidance left to fate,
The storm that then will wildly rage
May press the canvas, the crew engage,
Until the South, now desolate,
Can man her drifting ships of war,
And like a shooting, falling star,
Sweep the Yankees from the field,
And graven victory on her conquering shield.

'Tis our only hope. Smile, fair Goddess, you beckon me! Crimson fields beyond the Potomac plead with me for blood. Before the eternal throne I have sworn an oath to do the deed. And though he were my brother of the same birth, I would slay him. (*Approaching Box.*) How calm and peaceful with those loved ones clustering there. Quick, quick, or mercy may overthrow my dread resolve! Courage, O heart! (*Looks in Box.*) Now all ye powers of fate, come, nerve thou my arm! (*Grasps firmly his weapon—Enters the box behind—Fires and shoots the President in the head.*)

Assassin. (*Leaping on the Stage.*) *Sic Semper Tyrannis!* The South is avenged; the monster is dead. Arise, and strike for liberty! Down, down, with the false Yankee horde! *Exeunt.*

Mrs. Lincoln. O, horrors! The President is slain! O, what fiendish hand could do it? Break now, poor heart; thy very life is crushed out here. O, murdered? Slain? O, my God, draw out this vital spark, and let me die. *Swoons.*

Citizens. Pursue—slay—kill the murderer!
Exit, following Assassin, the sound of horses' feet dying away in the distance.

SCENE II. *Room in Secretary Seward's House—Seward on Sick Bed—Fred. Seward in Attendance—Time, Night.*

A loud Ringing heard. Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, a man below wishes to be shown in.

Fred. Seward. At this late hour? Tell him my father can not see e'en friends on urgent business now.

Exit Servant. Noise Without. Enter Servant, Hastily.

Servant. He won't be denied admittance.

Second Assassin, Rushing in.

2d Assassin. No, the hand of fate can not be stayed! Vengeance must be done. (*Stabbing Mr. Seward.*) Die, thou abettor to civil war and irrepressible slaughter, die! *Stabbing him again.*

Fred. Seward. O, father! O, thou fiend, art thou mad?

Rushing on Assassin.

Ass'n. Scion of a baneful tree, I'll draw the ruddy sap from thee!

Stabbing him and Flying.

Fred. S. Murder! O father, treachery hath devised these horrid wounds. O father, art thou slain?

Sew. My dear son, no! The steel made not so deep a wound in my weak flesh as in my soul. Art thou much hurt?

Fred. S. No, father; my wounds are not severe.

Sew. Thanks, O heaven, for thy life!

O, my country, how dark the shadows fall
When assassination spreads its dismal pall.
I fear this dastardly assault on me
Is only a scene in a tragedy.

Enter Servants and Attendants, Rushing in, Etc.

O, fie, what work is here? Slay! Pursue! Etc.

Exit.

Enter MESSENGER.

A fearful sight; O drunk I am with horror to-night.

Sew. (*Partly Rising.*) Speak out, man!

Mess. Then be prepared. A fearful tale, and all unwelcome unto thee. It is my painful lot to tell. The great Lincoln was shot to-night.

Sew. And slain?

Mess. Sir, his wound is mortal.

Sew. I did feel the hand that smote me here stabbed the State, reaching for its life. Why could it not find out mine.

Faints from loss of blood.

Fred. Sew. Look! Look! A physician call!

SCENE III. *An Old House near a Swamp in Flames—Soldiers in Blue Around.*

1st Soldier. Come forth! Surrender!

Assassin. (*Within.*) I fear not death; take thou that. *Fires.*

2d Sol. Ha, ha! You must improve your aim.

1st Sol. Come forth, thou murderer, assassin, fiend!

Assassin. Never will I yield.

3d Sol. Then die, foul devil, die!

Fires.

Assassin. (Rushing forth.) A curse on the North! O, death, is all thy vengeance poured out on me? O, death, is this thy icy hand? Is there none to pity me? *Dies.*

As the flames die away, Spirits Rise and Sing:

O, mortal man, yield not to hate,—
Drive hence the poison from thy heart;
Nor vengeful feelings satiate,
Lest thou do learn, when all too late,
That hope shall from thy soul depart.

O, mortal man, judge not in pride
The soul that yields in weakness' hour;
O, who can tell the surging tide
Whose seething madness doth deride,
And laugh to scorn all human power.

Vain man, in all thy weakness hide
The faults of man in charity;
Nor drag from out the loathsome tide
Foul crime, when justice can decide
To leave it in obscurity.

O mortal, lost, learn thou the fate
That God decrees shall follow crime;
For he whose heart is obdurate,
And mars sweet life or strikes the State,
Must feel his fearful wrath sublime.

SCENE IV. *A Street in Washington—Citizens Meeting.*

1st Citizen. Good morning, neighbor, surely you rise early. Lovest thou gin?

2d Cit. Unrefreshing, fitful sleep, tossed my weary head last night. A thirst unquenchable burns up all men—a thirst for blood.

1st Cit. As war subsides, the heart becomes desolate in us all, and still these stormy times the country shake, and stir with fever the active blood, and make all men quake with fear.

Enter Third Citizen.

2d Cit. My friends, hast heard the news?

All. What wonder now.

3d Cit. And can't be said in Washington that such a fearful, horrid deed, could be known all o'er the world, to freeze every human heart where swift electric sparks can fly and proclaim this crime aloud, and you not know your heavy loss. O! O! O!

1st Cit. Well, speak out, and fill our eager ears with this horrid now.

3d Cit. The noble Lincoln by bloody hands was slain last night, while witnessing a play at Ford's.

O, horrors! O, heavens!

1st Cit. Then blush with shame, America! So foul a deed ne'er before disgraced this land.

2d Cit. Who? Where is the murderer? dead?

3d Cit. All the house did know him well. the infamous actor, Booth, is he who with pistol ball pierced that noble head; then leaping on the stage, quickly rushed away, shouting, "*Sic semper tyrannis!*"—old Virginia's motto.

All. O heaven! O heaven!

Enter Fourth Citizen, hastily.

All. What now?

1st Cit. Have you heard the news? The President is dead—murdered.

4th Cit. (Interrupting.) All horrors here in this bloody land have made their home, emulating the fearful record of the past. I have more tales heard in this night than e'er before with frenzy stirred the blood of man. Seward, too, was assailed in his bed and stabbed quite near to death.

All. O, horror! horror!

4th Cit. To make complete this tragic night and fill the calendar of death, a telegram has been received giving the particulars of the end of Booth, the vile assassin, with other conspirators taken.

All. Hurrah! Hurrah!

1st Cit. Good news, indeed, hurrah! For once foul blood was spilt where better men do die.

4th Cit. That infamy might be added to disgrace and a spectacle held up for all the world, "Old Jeff," who, with all his high vaunting, fled, by a squadron of Michigan horse has been captured. O shame—disguised as a woman, too! The traitor was thus skulking away!

All. Shameful end to all this war.

1st Cit. Fit episode to slavery.

4th Cit. Let's away to the White House. Rumor says his wound is fatal, though not dead the good Lincoln is.

1st Cit. Behold the flags are drooping low

While all the land is wrapped in woe.

All. Away, away, to the White House away!

Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Room in the President's Mansion. Pres. Lincoln in bed—Mrs. L. and Family weeping around, etc.*

Enter DOCTOR.

Doctor. (Aside.) All the balms of the East could not save his life ; 'tis past the skill of mortal science.

Enter GRANT and STAFF, meeting.

Grant. Ah, sad meeting. Doctor, is there no hope ; and must he die ?

Doctor. None, sir ; he now is near his last. Soon his bright spirit will be free. Alas ! How fearful and how sad.

Enter STANTON.

Stanton. Thank heaven, General, you have returned. I now stand wrapped in awe and sorrowing gaze on destiny.

Grant. A fearful fate. Not all the blood which has been spilt on many fields so touched the Nation's heart with grief. And O, I grieve with those sad weeping mourners there. (*Pointing to Mrs. L. and family.*)

Mrs. Lincoln. (Rising.) O for one word, one little word, one token more of love on earth. *The President moans and dies.*

Break my heart ! death hath entered here. No grief can wake that breast to life. *Kneeling.*

O, thou God, who inhabits the universe, and takes notice of each sparrow as it falls ; Thou, whose eye scans the globe from pole to pole, with impressible pigment photographing a world in action, deed and thought ; while we can not understand why evil deeds mingle with the good, we know that Thou becometh by promise the widow's guardian, the father of the fatherless. Spirit eternal, look down to-night on this unhappy land ! And pity not only me, but the weeping widows and orphans, too, that mourning faint all over the Union, now desolate, and cry to heaven, not for vengeance, but for peace—the glorious dawn of peace. O, Father of us all, let the blood—the blood of him I loved—be an atonement for all the crime of fraternal war. *Rising.*

My children, you are orphans now. And we must look up and trust in Him, whose word as a bow spans the parting cloud, giving promise of sunshine when the storm is o'er. O, then the sun in all his majesty shall beaming shine, and warm our hearts from pine clad Maine to more genial shores that girt the tropic gulf, and thence o'er desert wastes to the western golden clime.

Attendants. Dead ! Dead ! Alas ! Alas ! etc.

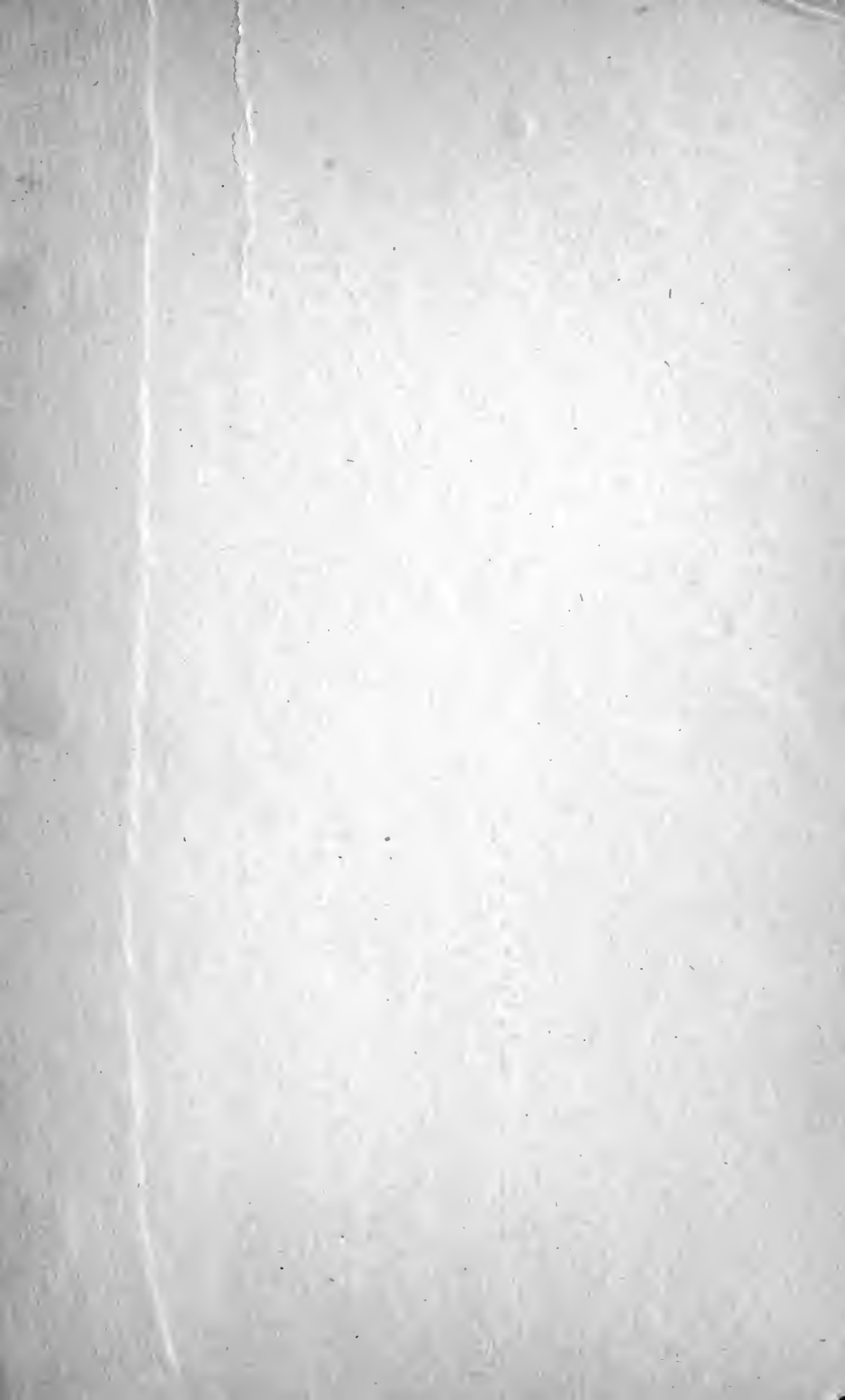
Grant. Dire fate, that one so good and pure should thus be taken off his glory, shining as a brilliant star, fond beacon to guide the eye of hope wherever despotism frowned ! Alas, O God, the puny mind of man can not fathom the depths of thy dread mysteries. We only see

the chastening of Thy hand in this, and trust in Thee. O, let the death of him who sweetly slumbereth at last allay revengeful hate, and save to Thee our sinking State. Bloodshed o'er, let happy days bless the land where oft' the blaze of slaughter made it desolate.

Stanton. O, since the mighty King hath swallowed up immortality, and robbed us of all except the cold remains of him we loved, and left the land so dark in sorrow wrapped, we for a while must hide away our grief and bury decently our great, noble dead.

Journal L





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 010 924 097 7

